

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

## REPORT NO

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COUNTRY Poland

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Cultural and Artistic Life

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**SOURCE**

1. Cultural and artistic life in Poland is directed in a most complicated manner by the Cultural Division of the United Polish Workers' Party under Pawel Hoffman. This division is responsible for the propagation and execution of actual trends to be observed by all units and individuals engaged in cultural and artistic activity. General instructions come from Moscow of course, [redacted] [redacted]

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and artistic activity. General instructions come from Moscow. [redacted] this cooperation between Warsaw and Moscow is not too smooth and that people responsible for problems on the Polish side sometimes just try to guess what Moscow thinks and intends by reading "Pravda" and professional papers such as "Soviet Music" as far as musical trends are concerned. All instructions are sent from Hoffman to the Ministry of Culture under Sokorski which is supposed to supervise execution of instructions.

2. Hoffman is a Jew aged about 40-43 years old, not very clever but politically well placed in Warsaw, although he was recently dropped from the praesidium of the United Polish Workers' Party. Hoffman was removed from the Central Committee of the Party as a penalty for his being held responsible by the Party for its failures in the field of cultural policy. There is no doubt that under Hoffman, the organizational side of this activity in particular suffered greatly.

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3.  Sokorski to be a good man. Of course he is a Communist but not of the Moscow brand. He is patriotic in his way, and artists and musicians, etc, in Poland believe that he really does care about Polish culture, in contrast to many others employed in the Ministry of Culture who are simply Sovietizing Polish culture. Sokorski is not a Jew as has often been stated. He spent some years in Moscow and he has some good connections there.
4. His deputy is Jan Wilczyk. His nomination as Vice Minister of Culture came as a shock to Warsaw. Some people laughed and some were horror-struck. For a time Wilczyk was head of the Bureau dealing with the selection of theatre plays and films, etc. In the Ministry of Culture Wilczyk has not much to say and really his nomination is still a surprise to Polish intellectual circles.
5. Wilczyk was replaced in the bureau of selection of plays and films by Jerzy Panski. The killing of anything good in the theatre and placing on the stage all possible political rubbish is attributed to this bureau.

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6. Panski was recently replaced by Balicki who in this capacity has already been to Paris to the International Theatre Festival with a Polish team of actors. In the Ministry of Culture Jerzy Jasienski is quite influential. He is responsible for the practical spreading of culture and artistic trends according to instructions from the Cultural Division of the Party. Jasienski and Sokorski do not like each other and Sokorski has everybody's sympathy in this quarrel. The director of the financial division of the Ministry is Piotrowski. He pays the artists and actors their regular and special allocations.
7. The Ministry is situated in the Kr Przedmiescie in its own building. All difficult problems are decided personally by Jakub Berman. He is considered to be a clever man, in Warsaw, the only real Marxist who could properly stand up to discussion with Moscow. Even in the artistic field he always gives the final decision. 25X1X 25X1X
8. Considerable bureaucracy exists in the Warsaw regime.
9. Socialist realism introduced into Polish cultural life after the Szczecin congress after 1949, resulted in the strangulation of development in Polish art, theatre, music, etc. It reduced the theatre and plastic art to the lowest possible level, practically to a provincial standard. The Polish theatre in particular, which was so good before World War II, is now made up purely of propaganda acts. The only good actors are the old ones who are slowly dying out and the newcomers, who are the product of the Polish Dramatic Academy, do not promise much for the future. Polish painting and sculpture are in a tragic state. Among the sculptors only Ksawery Dunikowski is able to maintain his former rather good standard.
10. After the congress of the United Polish Workers' Party the regime declared that liberalism would come to literature, art and music. This problem was much discussed by the last Congress of Polish Literary men in Warsaw. Until now, however, there is no change in the regime's practical attitude towards art and literature. The rules of socialism are very strong; an artist cannot create according to his own will, and definitely could not survive if he should revolt against this rule.

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